



Twas The Night Before Jesus Came

Times Remembered
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Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house
 Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
 Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
 In hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
 Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
 And Mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
 Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter,
 I sprang to my feet to see what the matter.
 Away to the window I flew like a flash
 Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
 But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here
 With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
 I knew in a moment it must be THE DAY!

The light of his face made me cover my head
 It was Jesus! Returning just like he said.
 And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
 I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which he held in his hand.
 Was written the name of every saved man.
 He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;
 When He said "It's not here," my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love
 He gathered to take to His Father above.
 With those who were ready He rose without a sound
 While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
 I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate.
 I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
 Oh! if only I had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;
 The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
 There's only one life and when comes the last call
 We'll find that the Bible was true after all!

GRIN and BEAR IT



"I told you not to clutter up my speeches with issues!"

A diet of pecans, almonds and pistachios is just nuts



America's Heartland
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Do you know why they closed the restaurant on the moon? It had no atmosphere.

What do you call a fake noodle? An Impasta.

Why did the scarecrow win an award? Because he was outstanding in his field.

Those are just some of the many jokes I've received over the years that have never found their way into this column. Not that they're bad.

Well, OK, they are bad.

But I can safely say there is no bad scripture. That's because "All

scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Bible is a truly amazing book. From cover to cover, it is the Word of God. It is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah said God's word is like a fire, like a hammer that breaks rocks into pieces.

While the Bible is an incredible resource, we know that many people never bother to open it, even in America's heartland where just about everyone has a copy. I heard a preacher say once that if all the people who have Bibles on bookshelves were to open them at the same time, a dust storm beyond description would be triggered.

If that's true, then it means the power of the scriptures isn't being unleashed in our lives or the lives of our families and friends. That's unfortunate, because God's Word is a source of great

strength and true joy. A joke can bring smiles to our faces, but God's Word brings smiles to our very souls.

Don't get me wrong. I always enjoy when my readers send me jokes, like the one who told me the shovel was a groundbreaking invention.

Or the one from the fellow who told me graveyards are crowded because people are dying to get in.

Or the one from the lady who says when she asks her husband to put the dog out, he always says he didn't know it was on fire.

Or the one from the fellow who said "the rotation of earth really makes my day."

Or the one from the lady who said she had considered a diet of pecans, almonds and pistachios, but decided that's just nuts.

So, you see, there are bad jokes. But, rest assured, there are no bad scriptures.

Roger Alford offers words of encouragement to residents of America's heartland. Reach him at rogeralford1@gmail.com.

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